

ACTION-ORIENTED APPROACH WITH ICT IN TEACHING AND LEARNING OF FRENCH IN SOME NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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Résumé

L'enseignement et l'apprentissage de la langue française au Nigéria peuvent être une expérience intrigante et, dans la plupart des cas, difficile, surtout sans l'utilisation d'une approche actionnelle et des TIC. Enseigner la langue française nécessite des compétences spécifiques afin de stimuler l'intérêt de l'apprenant. Cet article cherche à explorer l'utilisation de l'approche orientée vers l'action comme méthodologie et cent cinquante (150) questionnaires distribués aux étudiants universitaires au Nigéria, pour découvrir l'importance et la pertinence des TIC telles que la vidéoconférence, le zoom, le webinaire, le google classroom, réseau câble préenregistré, télévision, appareil de classe virtuelle, etc., et approche orientée vers l'action. En raison de l'importance de la langue française au Nigéria, l'utilisation améliorée et continue d'une approche orientée vers l'action et des TIC sont des tâches importantes pour tout le monde. On découvre qu'une approche orientée vers l'action contribue à stimuler l'enseignement et l'apprentissage de la langue française, favorise une absorption rapide et la rétention de la mémoire. Le chercheur conclut que l'enseignement et l'apprentissage de la langue française peuvent être remarquables en utilisant une approche orientée vers l'action et les TIC et encourage ainsi les étudiants à développer un plus grand intérêt pour le sujet.

Mots clés: *TIC, acteur social, perspective actionnelle, classe virtuelle, vidéoconférence zoom*

Abstract

Teaching and learning the French language in Nigeria can be an intriguing and, in most cases, difficult experience, especially without the use of an action-oriented approach and ICTs. Teaching the French language requires specific skills in order to stimulate the interest of the learner. This article seeks to explore the use of the action-oriented approach as a methodology and one hundred and fifty (150) questionnaires distributed to university students in Nigeria, to discover the importance and relevance of ICTs such as videoconferencing, zooming, webinar, google classroom, pre-recorded cable network, television, virtual classroom device, etc., and action-oriented approach. Due to the importance of the French language in Nigeria, the improved and continued use of an action-oriented approach and ICTs are important tasks for everyone. We discover that an action-oriented approach

helps stimulate the teaching and learning of the French language, promotes rapid absorption and retention of memory. The researcher concludes that teaching and learning the French language can be remarkable using an action-oriented and ICT and thus encourages students to develop a greater interest in the subject.

Key Words: *ICT, social actor, action-oriented, virtual classroom, zoom video conference*

Introduction

The teaching and learning of French language in Nigeria can be onerous and sometimes laborious endeavors without the use of ICT and action-oriented approach. Needles to remind us that, French language is a foreign language in Nigeria; an Anglophone nation surrounded by Francophone countries like Niger Republic in the North, Benin Republic in the West, Cameroon in the East and Chad in the North-East.

In addition, French is one of the international languages most widely used in commerce, scientific and technological research, administration, education, literature, etc. With the gained knowledge of French language, Nigerians and francophone countries will be able to work hand in hand in areas of science and technology. For French teaching and learning to be effective, recent approach should be adopted.

The question begging for answer here is: Which approach is best suitable for teaching and learning of French in Nigeria? What can be done for French teaching and learning to be more effective? To answer these questions, the teachers of French in Nigeria have no choice than to devise ways of making the teaching and learning of French language very interesting, dynamic, unique and robust. This is why the need for the improved and implicit use of ICT and action-oriented approach.

This article seeks to evaluate the use of ICT and action-oriented approach, the level of interest the students put in the use of ICT during teaching with action-oriented approach and the feedback from the students. We proceed by defining ICT.

1.1 The ICT: Attempts at Definition

ICT is an acronym that stands for Information Communication Technology. However, apart from explaining it as an acronym, the fact remains that there is not a universally accepted definition of ICT. The reason for this is because the concepts, methods and applications involved in ICT are constantly evolving on an almost daily basis. It is difficult to keep up with the changes as they happen so fast. A good way to think about ICT,

to our mind, is to consider all the uses of digital technology that already exist to help individuals, businesses and organizations use information.

Meanwhile, ICT covers any product that will store, retrieve, manipulate, transmit or receive information electronically in a digital or non-digital form. For example, personal computers, digital television, email, robots, etc. So ICT is concerned with the storage, retrieval, manipulation, transmission or receipt of digital data. Importantly, it is also concerned with the way these different uses can work with each other.

Information & Communication Technology (ICT) covers all forms of computer and communication equipment and software used to create, design, store, transmit, interpret and manipulate information in its various formats. Personal computers, laptops, tablets, mobile phones, transport systems, televisions, and network technologies are just some examples of the diverse array of ICT tools.

According to Cuq (2003: 238): "The acronym ICT means Information Communication Technology and is progressively taking the place of 'new technologies'; it refers also to two main potentialities of computer system: access, in a globalised manner, to a great quantity of coded information in digital form, and communication at long distance through various ways that was hitherto impossible as a result of ancient technologies, world wide web being the most popular". (The translation is ours).

Studies in ICT include many disciplines, such as mathematics, information systems, physics and design. The skills acquired in an ICT degree can be applied to everything from satellites to iPhone apps, from Circuit Television scanners to computer games. While many people think of Information Technology when they think of ICT, Multimedia Design, Computer Systems Engineering and Software Engineering also lead to careers in ICT. The term ICT is so vast today that we need to study its application to French language education in Nigeria.

1.2 *Action-Oriented Approach in Teaching and Learning of French Language*

After communicative approach of the 80s, came in the mid-90s a new educational approach called the "action-oriented approach". This approach proposes to focus on tasks to be performed. The action must elicit interaction that stimulates the development of receptive and interactive skills. Thus action-oriented approach provokes interactive action: "An action-oriented approach considers above all the teacher and learner of a language as social actors having to accomplish tasks (which are not only linguistic) in given circumstances and environment, within a particular field of action.

While speech acts are carried out in language activities, these are themselves part of actions in a social context which alone give them their full meaning. There is a task insofar as the action is an act of one (or more) subject(s) who strategically mobilize(s) the skills at their disposal in order to achieve a determined result". (CECR, chap. 2.1, p. 15)(The translation is ours). For the Council of Europe, language activities that the learner must master are part of actions in a social context which give them their full meaning. The privileged perspective is of the action-oriented type in that it considers above all the user and the learner of a language as social actors having to accomplish tasks (which are not only linguistic) in given circumstances and environment within a particular field of action.

Speech acts are carried out using language activities, which are part of actions in a social context. This alone gives them their full meaning. In action-oriented approach, there is a "task" so long as the action is the act of one (or more) subject(s) that strategically mobilize(s) the skills at their disposal in order to achieve a determined result. The action-oriented approach therefore also takes into account the cognitive and affective resources and all the capacities that the social actor possesses and implements.

The use of a language includes actions performed by people who, as individuals and as social actors, develop a set of general skills and, in particular, a competence to communicate in language. Such individuals use skills at their disposal in various contexts and conditions and by submitting to different constraints in order to carry out language activities making it possible to process (in reception and in production) texts relating to themes within the framework. The control of these activities by the interlocutors leads to the strengthening or modification of skills.

A task is defined as any objective action that the actor represents to himself as having to achieve a given result according to a problem to be solved, an obligation to be fulfilled, a goal that has been set. It can be just as well, according to this definition, to move a cupboard, to write a book, to take the decision in the negotiation of a contract, to play a game of cards, to order a meal in a restaurant, translate a text into a foreign language or prepare a class journal as a group.

2.1 *Methodology*

The methodology of the research is exploratory research of one time. It has been carried out in three universities in Midwestern of Nigeria, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State Universities, Malete and Landmark University, Omuaran. The reasons for the choice of these universities are because of their proximities to central region of Nigeria where the teaching

and learning of French language is accorded a pride of place. The population studied was made up of 60 students of French from University of Ilorin, 50 from Kwara State University, Malete and 50 from Landmark University, Omuaran. A combination of random sample methods, rational and simple was used. A sample of 150 respondents was administered with structured questionnaire. Some simple percentages and frequency tables were used in the preparation of data.

2.2 Results and Discussions

Table 1: Socio-demographic distributions of the respondents

	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Sex of Respondents	Male	36	24.0
	Female	114	76.0
	Total	150	100.0
Age	<15	6	4.0
	15-20	97	64.7
	21-25	27	18.0
	>25	20	13.3
	Total	150	100.0
Level of Studying French	1 st Year	54	36.0
	2 nd Year	24	16.0
	3 rd Year	54	36.0
	4 th Year	18	12.0
	Total	150	100.0

Source: Field work (2020)

The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents reveal that 24.0% are males while 76.0% are females. The study found the ages of those surveyed as; less than 15 years represent 4% of the population, 15 - 20 years represent 64.7%, 21 - 25 years represent 18%, while > 25 years represent 13.3%. An indication that shows that the study population is a fairly young population capable of learning through modeling and role-playing (Badura, 1997). In terms of level of French, the study population has the following characteristics; 1st year students account for 36%, 2nd year students 16%, 3rd year 36% and 4th year students.

Table 2: Method of teaching of French language in your University

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid %	Cumulative %
Action-oriented approach	6	4.0	4.0	4.0

Audio-visual approach	18	12.0	12.0	16.0
Communicative approach	101	67.3	67.3	83.3
Interrogative approach	25	16.7	16.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field work (2020)

The study showed that 4% of French teachers use audiovisuals in teaching, 12% use action-oriented, and 67.3% use the communicative approach while 16.7% use the interrogative method. This result proved that action-oriented approach of teaching of the French language is unpopular and rare used among the teachers of French in among the selected universities in Nigeria.

Table 3: Types of ICT used in teaching and learning of French language in your school.

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid %	Cumulative %
Virtual classroom app	6	4.0	4.0	4.0
Live programme	18	12.0	12.0	16.0
Pre-Recorded audio/video	101	67.3	67.3	83.3
Zoom/WinRAR	25	16.7	16.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field work (2020)

Table 3 above showed that 4% of French teachers use virtual classroom application in teaching, 12% use live programme, and 67.3% use Pre-Recorded audio/video while 16.7% use Zoom/WinRAR. This result proved that the use of ICT in teaching and learning of the French language is becoming popular and used among the teachers of French in among the selected universities in Nigeria.

Table 4: Do you agree that Action-Oriented is the best approach of teaching and learning French language in Nigeria?

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid %	Cumulative %
I agree	124	82.7	82.7	82.7
I do not agree	26	17.3	17.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field work (2020)

As a corollary to the above, the study showed that 82.7% of French students agreed action-oriented is the best approach of teaching and learning while 17.3% do not agree with the statement. The implication is that a significant proportion of the study population prefers the use of action-oriented as an approach of teaching and learning the French language. In another study conducted by Glasgow (2010), the researcher found that students tend to learn increasingly quickly when exposed to practical advice through role distributions.

Table 5: Action-Oriented is the most effective approach of teaching and learning French literature including any genre (prose, poetry and play)

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid %	Cumulative %
I agree	121	80.7	80.7	80.7
I do not agree	29	19.3	19.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field work (2020)

The study also showed that 80.7% estimated that action-oriented approach is more effective in teaching, understanding and internalizing the French literature (prose, poetry and play) against 19.3% who do not agree with the above statement.

Table 6: French language is more difficult to understand without role distribution and learners as social actors (Action-Oriented approach)

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid %	Cumulative %
I agree	120	80.6	80.6	80.6
I do not agree	30	19.4	19.4	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field work (2020)

The table above shows that students have difficulty in understanding the French language without action-oriented approach. 80.6% agree that the French language is more difficult to understand without action-oriented. 19.4% disagree with the statement.

Table 7: Action-Oriented approach in French class using audio-visual aid such as pre-recorded or live TV programme, zoom/WinRAR conference, etc., leaves unforgettable impression

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid %	Cumulative %
I agree	145	96.7	96.7	96.7
I do not agree	5	3.3	3.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field work (2020)

The opinion of the respondents on use of action-oriented approach in French class using audio-visual aids shows that 96.7% agree that it leaves the student with an unforgettable memory of the vocabularies they have acquired because it links them with the linguistic expressions and 3.3% do not agree on this. The implication of the above data is that there is a positive relationship between action-oriented and French language learning in English speaking African countries.

Table 8: Action-Oriented approach only creates an amusement without any concrete knowledge transfer

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid %	Cumulative %
I agree	39	26.0	26.0	26.0
I do not agree	111	74.0	74.0	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field work (2020)

The response shows that 26% of the sampled population agreed that action-oriented serves only to entertain without transferring knowledge; while 74% disagree that action-oriented serves to transfer knowledge. Consequently, we are led to conclude that action-oriented approach goes beyond entertainment. It helps the teacher and students of the French language to assimilate and leave with lasting positive impressions vis-à-vis the topic learnt.

Table 9: Action-Oriented approach with ICT gives room to abuse of social media

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid %	Cumulative %
I agree	5	3.3	3.3	100.0
I do not agree	145	96.7	96.7	96.7
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field work (2020)

The respondents do not agree that Action-Oriented approach using ICT gives room for the abuse of social media. 96.7% do not agree on the fact that social media. On the contrary, with proper supervision and timely intervention from the teacher, the incidence of the abuse will be very minimal. One can postulate that the advantage of Action-Oriented approach using ICT far outweighed its shortcoming.

Table 10: Electricity, general power supply and internet speed limit the use of ICT in your school

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid %	Cumulative %
I agree	111	74.0	74.0	100.0
I do not agree	39	26.0	26.0	26.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field work (2020)

Majority of the respondents or 74.0% agree that electricity and general power supply limit the use of ICT in your school. While 26.0% do not agree. There is no doubt that these elements play greater roles in teaching and learning of French in Nigeria using Action-Oriented approach and ICT.

3.1

Challenges and Prospects of Using ICT

It is obvious that majority of the respondents, over 74.0% favor the use of action-oriented in teaching and learning French language. However, in Nigeria, this method has its challenges and obstacles if not carefully and meticulously deployed. Unlike traditional methods of teaching, action-oriented approach with ICT requires a great deal of regular power supply and constant internet accessibility.

Hernes (2004: 7) sums up the problems and the prospects of the use of ICT in the teaching and learning of French Language in this way: “The integration of computers in schools is a costly and sometimes complex process, which requires series of equipment, competent personnel for the installation and functioning, a technical assistant and the training of other users for the good use of these materials. But, the implicit advantages to the school (...) are significant as such that the introduction of these technologies in the classes be henceforth made as one of the priorities of the planners of education (...) even if the challenges and the obstacles to overcome in these two contexts are often very different”. (The Translation is ours).

It is pertinent also to note that all topics (acte de parole) in French can be taught using action-oriented method and ICT. For instance, Oral

expression can be taught through pre-recorded emission from any of the television channels to replay for the students to listen to. For literature, Internet can be source of reference, interactive sessions, exchange of ideas, commentaries, opinion and so on. Students can connect to other students across the globe and carry out some healthy educative chat with them. The role of teacher here is to select the best ICT that suits the particular topic and give thorough guidance and supervision to the students during its use.

The greater access to higher education is becoming a necessary element in expanding economic prosperity and improving the quality of life. Owing to the fact that the world is fast changing at a speedy pace, the challenge in the education sector is equally evolving rapidly. The world today has become a global village due to recent development in technologies in general, and Information Communication Technology or ICT in particular.

3.2 *Recommendations*

This study concludes that action-oriented approach in ICT has a positive impact in improving the teaching and learning of the French language in non-French speaking African countries like Nigeria and Kenya. The findings of the study revealed that at present very few French teachers employ the use of the action-oriented approach. This may be the reason for the difficulty for students of French in non-French speaking African universities to express themselves in French.

Since teaching the French language in non-French speaking African countries requires a different approach, this paper has explored the importance of Action-Oriented as main method in teaching French to students of French at Anglophone universities. Therefore, the following recommendations are presented to improve the teaching and learning of the French language through Action-Oriented;

1. French teachers should be encouraged to increase the use of action-oriented approach using relevant ICT available in order to enhance the teaching and learning of the French language in the 21st century.
2. The need to involve students in classroom participation through action-oriented approach and ICT cannot be overstated. Students should have a role to play, to emulate, and to act especially in order to convey lessons effectively.
3. Although this study does not condemn other approaches of teaching and learning of French language in non-French speaking African countries, it seeks for complementary application. A French teacher might combine presentation, seminars or oral group discussions with action-oriented approach to create a more robust teaching and learning robust experience.

Conclusion

The study provides empirical evidence on the impact of action-oriented methods and the use of ICT in the teaching and learning of the French language in Nigerian universities. Data was collected by distributing questionnaires to students of French at three universities. The questionnaire aimed at finding students' knowledge, attitude and perception of the importance of action-oriented method in ICT in the acquisition of the French language in Nigerian universities.

The increase and implicit use of Action-Oriented and ICT in French education can considerably foster teaching and learning process in French language. The importance of involvement of Action-Oriented and ICT in French Education in this dimension is evident as many teaching and learning today are successful due to the easy access and due to unlimited offers on the web and other forms of ICT couple with action-oriented approach. It is only pertinent that teachers incorporate or integrate to a large extent the use of Action-Oriented approach and ICT such as zoom/WinRAR, virtual class apparatus and other necessary ICT in teaching and learning of French language in the 21st century.

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Annex Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

I am conducting a research on the **ICT AND USE OF ACTION-ORIENTED APPROACH TO TEACHING AND LEARNING OF FRENCH LANGUAGE IN SOME NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES**. I would appreciate if you could kindly complete the questionnaire. Any information obtained in connection to the study will be used strictly for the purpose of this research and will be treated confidentially and anonymously.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

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Section A: Biodata

1. Socio-demographic distributions of the respondents

i. Sex: Male [] Female [].

ii. Age: a. <15 [] b. 21-25 [] c. >25 []

iii. Level of Studying French: a. 1st Year [] b. 2nd Year [] c. 3rd Year [] d. 4th Year []

Section B: Methodology and ICT

2. Method of teaching of French language in your University.

a. Audio-visual method [] b. Communicative Method [] c. Action-Oriented Method [] d. Interrogative Method [].

Section C: ICT

3. Types of ICT that is used in teaching and learning of French language in your school.

a. Virtual classroom [] b. Live cable network programme [] c. Pre-recorded audio/video [] c. Zoom/WinRaR []

4. Do you agree that Action-Oriented is the best approach of teaching and learning French language in Nigeria?

a. I agree [] b. I do not agree []

5. Action-Oriented is the most effective approach of teaching and learning French literature including any genre (prose, poetry and play)

a. I agree [] b. I do not agree []

6. French language is more difficult to understand without role distribution and learners as social actors (Action-Oriented approach)

a. I agree [] b. I do not agree []

7. Action-Oriented approach in French class using audio-visual aid such as pre-recorded or live TV programme, zoom/WinRAR conference, etc., leaves unforgettable impression.

a. I agree [] b. I do not agree []

8. Action-Oriented approach only creates an amusement without any concrete knowledge transfer

a. I agree [] b. I do not agree []

9. Action-Oriented approach with ICT gives room to abuse of social media.

a. I agree [] b. I do not agree []

10. Electricity, general power supply and internet speed limit the use of ICT in your school.

a. I agree [] b. I do not agree []